

STRATEGIC PLANNING ALLOWS SMALL MANUFACTURER TO CONTINUE TO GROW

ABOUT ANKERPAK. In 2003, John Anker started Ankerpak, a manufacturing, packaging, and distribution company in Columbus, Georgia. The company evolved over the years to take on various product lines and services for its clients and now employs over 25 people. Ankerpak processes a wide variety of products, from markers to peanut butter.

THE CHALLENGE. When the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech, part of the MEP National Network™, started the Manufacturing CEO Roundtable in Columbus, Anker was part of the inaugural group of manufacturing leaders that began meeting monthly to support each other. The group discussed day-to-day operations, successes, and issues in their plants to learn from each other's experiences and work together to find solutions. Through these meetings, Anker quickly found a trusted partner in Derek Woodham, GaMEP's West Georgia Region Manager. Woodham not only understood manufacturing, but also the Columbus community and the unique challenges and opportunities associated with operating in West Georgia. When Woodham suggested Ankerpak develop a new strategic plan, the company embraced the challenge.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. GaMEP led Ankerpak's team on a series of strategic planning sessions. With so many different product lines, the company benefitted from a planning process that evaluated the current business and focused on tactics to increase sales. The team collected and analyzed data from the entire plant to find the best opportunities to make improvements, identifying three core metrics they thought were most likely to increase Ankerpak's net income. The company expanded into a larger facility, reduced labor costs, and implemented new safety measures, including a Lockout/Tagout program. When Ankerpak lacked the capacity to complete certain improvement projects, GaMEP worked to find resources that could provide assistance. These included an OSHA training and implementation, and a plant layout design that helped Ankerpak better utilize the new facility.

"Having Derek and the GaMEP as a resource right here in our community is very valuable to me as a small business owner. He's a trusted neighbor and is always ready and willing to help us. The money that we invest in services with the GaMEP always returns results that are meaningful and helpful for us."

-John Anker, President

RESULTS



Focused on three key metrics to increase net income by up to **12%**



Reduced cost in one division by **\$25,000** per year



Efficiently expanded into an additional **79,000** sq. ft. facility



Created a Lockout/Tagout program, installed additional machine guards, and updated safety signage

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